

TODAY, the whole of this column is devoted to news of books and their authors.

This is expected to be the greatest publishing season since the war and, though the autumn's books, as they come out, will of course be reviewed in our literary pages, advance news from the coulisses of Publishers' Row will be of interest, I hope, to the great majority of my readers. To those who already have a book, I apologise and say *au revoir* until next Sunday.

I now hand over to the foremost literary spy (he is unconnected with this newspaper) in London.

Fiction

BIG books mean big business. The longer the novel, the longer it absents itself from the shelves of the circulating library, the publisher's best friend. Small wonder, then, that Mr. Gollancz (with the Cresset Press) is pleased with Guy Endors's "King of Paris," a 200,000-word American Book-of-the-Month Club choice. It reconstructs—with gusto, it is safe to say—the lives of Dumas *père et fils*. Hardly pausing for breath, Mr. Gollancz plans to publish another 200,000-worder in November: "And Walk in Love," a novel by Henrietta Buckmaster, who makes St. Paul her central figure.

Even longer (this time from Collins) will be a 328-page American novel, "The Tontine," by Thomas Costain. With the greatest possible faith in the public's desire for quantity, Collins have prepared 100,000 copies of this saga of three families.

In October we shall see MacKinlay Kantor's "Andersonville" (W. H. Allen), which with its 768 pages has been proving of the order of popularity of "Gone With The Wind" in America. Known

there as "The Big A," it has taken the Pulitzer Prize. Here, the first printing of 50,000 copies will take forty tons of paper.

Not that our own novelists are shy of length. Nicholas Monsarrat takes rather more than 200,000 words to tell an explosive story of African racial problems: "The Tribe That Lost Its Head" (Cassell). Miss Rebecca West, in "The Fountain, Overflows," approaches 175,000 words, and gives warning that it is only the first part of a marathon work running into several volumes. Macmillan take the initial plunge in November.

As might be expected, Jonathan Cape has at least one first novel lively enough to compete with such Goliaths: David Williams's "Agent From The West," said to be a humorous peep into Ruritanian forty years on. So have Secker and Warburg, who consider Jack Reynolds's "A Sort Of Beauty" worthy of a first print of 15,000 copies.

More Fiction

BOTH Putnam, with "The Sanity Inspectors," by Friedrich Delich, and Methuen, with "The Old Umbrella," by Kelvin Lindemann, introduce new foreign fiction in October. Novelist Robert Kee translates "The Sanity Inspectors" from its original German: it concerns a priest and a psychiatrist. "The Old Umbrella" comes from Scandinavia with a ready-made reputation.

Hamish Hamilton has high hopes of a first novel with a Cambridge background, "The Apprentices," by June Hooper, while a surprising first-novelist is Dr. C. S. Lewis (Bles), who retells the story of Psyche and Cupid in "Till We Have Faces,"

but not, it seems, without theology creeping in.

Established novelists have not been idle. Later this month Pamela Hansford Johnson investigates love and conscience in "The Last Resort" (Macmillan); Alfred Dugan's "Winter Quarters" (Faber) tells of two young Gauls out and about in Julius Caesar's day; Rome is the locale for Alexander Baron's "Queen Of The East" (Collins), with Aurelian as Emperor.

William Sansom, faithful to his home ground, portrays in

"The Loving Eye" (Hogarth) a Londoner's obsession with a woman "across the way," while for those who recognised William Golding's worth in "Lord Of The Flies," there is his third—and, it is promised, terror-filled—novel, "Pincher Martin" (Faber).

Lives and Letters

THE next two months are nicely seasoned with biographies. One of them, fascinating product of two unusual minds. An unusual Gladstone (Constable), reveals how to be happy though

married to a G.O.M. For admirers of "The Blessed Girl," Rupert Hart-Davis promises Lady Emily Lutens's "The Birth of Rowland," in which Lady Emily's parents are seen through letters exchanged during enforced separation before her elder brother's birth. "Letters: Virginia Woolf and Lytton Strachey" (Chatto & Windus with Hogarth) can confidently be awaited as the

choice for October, by Gerald Durrell (Hart-Davis).

A letter written by Bernard Shaw at twenty-one comprises "My Dear Dorothea" (Dent). In it the young philosopher sets down what he calls "a practical system of moral education for females." D.F.C. "He was a redoubtable fighter, more serious than most, perhaps . . . with a turn of phrase and wit."

Robert Speaight's "Life of Hilaire Belloc" (Hollis and Carter) will not be ready before "Testimony to Hilaire Belloc" (Methuen), which promises an intimate glimpse of the early Belloc by his daughter and son-in-law.

A large canvas is needed for "The Heart Has Its Reasons," by the Duchess of Windsor (Michael Joseph). For more bizarre recollections one must wait for Gerald Hamilton's "Mrs. Norris and I" (Wingate), by the alleged model for Christopher Isherwood's Mr. Norris who changed trains so entertainingly in the thirties.

The Wide World

AMONG travel books there is Lord Kinross's "Portrait of Greece" (Max Parrish), illustrated with forty full-colour photographs by the Greek cameraman, Dimitri, who obviously derived both pleasure and stimulus from the assignment. The camera is busy again in "Spring on an Arctic Island" (Gollancz), by Katherine Scherman, who writes of the Eskimos.

These lovely, generous people are again investigated in "The Last King of Thule," this time by a Gallic wit, Jean Malaurie (Allen and Unwin). A stranger record is Lobsenz Rampa's "The Third Eye" (Secker and Warburg), a lama's-eye view of life in a Tibetan monastery.

Endeavour on the high seas and below them is represented by Eric C. Hoscoe's "Round The World In Wanderer III" (Oxford), an account of a three-year journey in a thirty-foot yacht, and "Man Explores The Sea," James Dugan's APC of underwater exploration (Hamish Hamilton). Africa, in travel books, is never far away, and megalomaniacs and children are anecdotally recalled by Alberto Dentil di Pirajno in "A Grave For A Dolphin" (Deutsch).

Light-heartedly, the lifeman returns from New York in "Fotter on America" (Hart-Davis); and it must be recorded for cookery-book enthusiasts who like travel-stained recipes that on the way is "Round The World In 80

Animals," the Book Society choice for October, by Gerald Durrell (Hart-Davis).

The ever-growing literature arising from the last war will receive many additions. Douglas Bader introduces "Wings Leader," by Group-Captain J. E. Johnson (Chatto & Windus). Group-Captain Peter Townsend, introducing "Lonely Warrior" (Sovener Press), says of its author, Belgian flyer Jean Offenbourg, "He was a redoubtable fighter, more serious than most, perhaps . . . with a turn of phrase and wit."

In "The One That Got Away" (Collins), with Michael Joseph), Kendal Burt and James Leasor tell of Franz von Werra, who achieved temporary notoriety as the only German prisoner of war in Britain to escape successfully from camp. It has been left to novelist Jerrard Tickell to reveal, in "Moon Squadron" (Wingate), the inside story of the R.A.F.'s hazardous contact with enemy-occupied Europe.

A war book of a different colour will be Basil Dean's long (322 pages) "Theatre At War" (Harrap), the story of B.N.S.A.

Theatre

THAT cry, "Television is killing the theatre," seems now to have been heard clearly by the book publishers, for a strong whiff of greasepaint pervades their autumn lists. Michael Redgrave: Actor, might loosely be included among "fan-books," but, prepared with critical care by Richard Findlater, it is obviously destined for intelligent fans. Heinemann will also raise the curtain on "Freddie Lonsdale," a sharp-eyed biography of her witty playwright father by Frances Donaldson.

An intriguing bit of theatre surely, will be "Mr. and Mrs. Davenport," by Frank Harris (Richards Press), resulting from the discovery of Mrs. Patrick Campbell's "prompt copy" of the text of the play based on Oscar Wilde's scenario.

Harold Hobson edits the first "International Theatre Annual" (Caldor), his contributors including playwrights Arthur Miller and John Whiting, and players Dame Sybil Thorndike and Sam Wanamaker. We may have to wait until November for the first full-dress biography of Beethoven Tree (Methuen), but the authorship is in capable hands; Hesketh Pearson (who once acted in his subject's company before turning writer) can be relied on not to spare that Tree.